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# Souvenirs for the Capital

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**Abstract:** Around 1350, a wandering lay priest called Sōkyū (dates unknown) left his home of Tsukushi in northern Kyushu, and embarked upon a journey through what is now the Tōhoku region of Japan. The “East Country”, as Sōkyū and his peers in the Imperial Palace call it, was considered a remote and wild land. It nonetheless held a romantic appeal for certain place names that had long been famous in the poetic canon. These famous place names, or *utamakura*, provide the basic structure for *Souvenirs*, and it soon becomes clear that one great motivation for Sōkyū’s journey is to view the landscapes of those celebrated places, and to better understand the origins and history of their names. The journal begins by introducing a man who “turned away from the mundane world”, and then shifts immediately to Sōkyū’s first-person perspective. The journey is here within the realm of formal Buddhist practice. Sōkyū’s determination to “follow into the past the tracks left under trees and over rocks” is founded upon the view that wandering supports ascetic practice and facilitates a purposeful rejection of the comforts of the material world. In the translation that follows, each *utamakura* is rendered into English, followed by its full Japanese name, only when that name’s meaning is highly relevant to Sōkyū’s poetry. Names of provinces, temples, and shrines, as well as *utamakura* sites mentioned in passing, are left in the Japanese, with an indication of the type of geographical feature they represent.

**Keywords:** Medieval, Nanbokuchō, travel diary, *utamakura*, *waka* poetry

## 1 Souvenirs for the Capital

Around the period of Kano [1350–1352], there was a man who had turned away from the mundane world.<sup>1</sup> Although I had not the will to pass through metal

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<sup>1</sup> The translation that follows is based on the text of *Souvenirs for the Capital* (*Miyako no tsuto* 都のつと) anthologized in the *Fusōshūyōshū* 扶桑拾葉集 (Tokugawa Mitsukuni, 1689), and

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**Original Title:** Miyako no tsuto 都のつと, A Travel Journal by Sōkyū 宗久

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mountains and iron walls, I resolved to follow into the past the tracks left under trees and over rocks. Thinking, “since nowhere is there a final abode,” I left my old home of Tsukushi one day to lose myself in wandering here and there.<sup>2</sup> Having some connections in the area, I lay upon the clouds of Mount Ōei and found lodging amidst the dews of the Ikuno Plain. Still wandering thus, I came to a place called Mount Iya in Tamba Province.<sup>3</sup> Though I did not depend upon it as a permanent refuge, I spent the remainder of that year there.

Early in third month of the next spring, I went to the Capital. For two or three days I made my way to Kiyomizu Temple, Kitano, and the like.<sup>4</sup> From there, I set out toward the East Country [Azuma] in order to continue with my journey.

I left the Capital still shrouded in the darkness of night. The remaining brightness of the pre-dawn moon was reflected in the waves of the Eastern River.<sup>5</sup> The voices of the calling birds carried over to the distant villages, and the hazy expanse of the sky traversed by mist was quite lovely. Soon, I crossed

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which is the base text for Fukuda Hideichi's annotated transcription in *Chūsei nikki kikōshū* 中世日記紀行集, Volume 51 of *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 新編日本古典文学大系. I have used the standard Hepburn system of transcription for rendering names and titles of people, places, and works. I have transliterated the classical Japanese poems according to the standard historical kana usage (*rekishiteki kanazukai*), but preserving the distinctions of h-stem syllables, namely ha, hi, hu, he, and ho. Translations are mine, because Sōkyū cites each of the poems for very specific referential purposes, and this did not always come through in the existing translations. Editions, translations and other works used are mentioned in the list of references at the end.

2 This line quotes a poem by Jakushō (10th c.) in *Shikashū*, Parting no. 181:

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Todomaramu</i>        | Whether to stay                   |
| <i>todomaraji tomo</i>   | or yet not to stay,               |
| <i>omohezu</i>           | I cannot determine                |
| <i>izuku mo tsuhi no</i> | since nowhere                     |
| <i>sumika naraneba</i>   | is there a final abode. (KT, 135) |

3 Mount Ōei and the Ikuno Plain are *utamakura* sites. The name of Mount Iya in Tamba Province is of uncertain origin. The imagery of clouds and dew in this passage echo the previous sentiment of lacking a “final abode”.

4 The Kiyomizu Temple of Higashiyama, and Tenmangu Shrine of Kitano, are located in present-day Kyoto.

5 “Eastern River” indicates the Kamo River, which at this time ran along the eastern outskirts of the Capital.

the Meeting Barrier [Ōsaka no seki]. The road beneath the cedars was still dark, and my footsteps echoed uncertainly upon the rocky surface of the Barrier.<sup>6</sup> At what point did I come to be so far removed from the Capital? I felt it as “a distance of three thousand miles”, and my thoughts still lingered upon the Capital, even more than on my hometown. That day I arrived at Ishiyama Temple, and I passed the night offering my most sincere prayers for attaining the transcendent heart of the Buddha.<sup>7</sup>

At dawn the next morning, I went in the company of some travelers leaving the temples and shrines of the Capital. As the sun rose we passed the shores of Shiga Bay. I looked over the wake of a boat paddling in the distance, and the elegance of Priest Manzei’s poem, “To what should it be compared?” floated up in my heart.<sup>8</sup> It is said that the head priest of Ryōgon Temple on Mount Hie pronounced poetry a frivolous and corrupt entertainment, and so had it banned. Later at Eishin Temple, while looking out at Lake Biwa in the breaking dawn, and watching the progress of a boat going into open water, he heard a person recite that poem. At that moment, he realized that poetry may indeed be an aid to Buddhist meditation, and thereafter he composed many poems on the twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus Sutra and the Ten Pleasures of the Pure Land. Reflecting on this story, I thought, “well, maybe so.”

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6 The sound of Sōkyū’s echoing footsteps is a reference to a poem by Fujiwara no Takatō (949–1013) in the *Shūishū*, Fall no. 169:

|                         |                                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Afusaka no</i>       | Osaka Barrier—                   |
| <i>seki no iwakado</i>  | our footsteps ring out           |
| <i>fuminarashi</i>      | on the stone path                |
| <i>yama tachiizuru</i>  | as I depart from the mountain    |
| <i>kirihara no koma</i> | with my Kirihara horse. (KT, 57) |

7 This is Ishiyama Temple of Ōmi Province, in present-day Ōtsu City. The “transcendent heart” of the Buddha does not appear to be a reference to a specific text or principle, but simply a state of mind or attitude to which Sōkyū aims in his practice.

8 This is an allusion to a famous poem in the *Man’yōshū* (vol. 3, No. 352) by Priest Mansei (8th c.):

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <i>Yo no naka wo</i>    | This life—                                |
| <i>nani ni tatohemu</i> | to what should it be compared?            |
| <i>Asaborake</i>        | At dawn,                                  |
| <i>kogiyuku fune no</i> | the boats as they row out,                |
| <i>ato no shiranami</i> | with white waves trailing after. (KT, 81) |

The poem appears in several other texts and poetry collections of the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries, most notably in *Jikkinshō* (Ten Lessons Explained, 1252) (SNKBT 51) and *Shasekishū* (Sand and Pebbles, Mujū Ichien, 1279–83) (SNKBT 52).

I passed by Mount Mirror [Kagami yama], and although I had reason enough with my recent change to the ink-black robes of a lay priest, I felt uneasy about my seeing my face, and was certainly not thinking, “well, I shall approach ...”<sup>9</sup> I wrote:

|                          |                                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Tachiyorite</i>       | Do not say, Mount Mirror,            |
| <i>mitsu to kataruna</i> | that I approached to look            |
| <i>Kagami yama</i>       | since the reflection of one          |
| <i>na wo yo ni tomen</i> | seeking to leave a name in the world |
| <i>kage mo ukereba</i>   | is dreadful to see                   |

As the number of days on the Road to the East [Azumaji] went silently by one after another, I passed through the well-known places, such as Fuwa Barrier, Narumi Bay, Mount Takashi, and Mount Futamura, and I have come all the way to Mount Midnight [Sayanonaka yama].<sup>10</sup> This is where Saigyō wrote, “Did I ever think I would cross here again?” and I could not help but agree how moving it was.<sup>11</sup>

It seems that there are differing opinions on whether Mount Midnight’s name is pronounced Mount *Sayanonaka* or Mount *Sayononaka*. When Middle Counselor Moronaka came down to this province [Suruga] on duty, he called it “Mount *Sayononaka*”, and it seems that the ancient poets before me, too, wrote it this way.<sup>12</sup> Even in the poetic anthologies, I feel one may find

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9 A reference to *Kokinshū* Misc. I, no. 899, poet unknown:

|                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Kagami yama</i>        | Mount Mirror—                 |
| <i>iza tachiyorite</i>    | well, I shall approach to see |
| <i>mite yukamu</i>        | whether the passing years     |
| <i>toshi henuru mi ha</i> | have accumulated              |
| <i>oiyashinuru to</i>     | to age this body. (KT, 18)    |

10 All of the place names in this passage are *utamakura* sites along the Tōkaidō, or as Sōkyū calls it here, Azumaji, or the Road to the East.

11 This line quotes a well-known poem by Saigyō (1118–1190) which appears in *Shin kokinshū*, Travel no. 987:

|                          |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Toshi takete</i>      | Did I ever think            |
| <i>mata koyubeshi to</i> | I would cross here again    |
| <i>omohiki ya</i>        | after aging so many years?  |
| <i>inochi narikeri</i>   | Such is this life           |
| <i>Sayanonaka yama</i>   | Mount Sayanonaka. (KT, 191) |

12 Minamoto no Moronaka (1115–1172) a statesman poet, was a contemporary of Saigyō. Moronaka’s poem about Mount Sayononaka no longer exists, but there are numerous examples of “Mount Sayo-no-naka” in poetry, including one by Monk Kakuben (late Heian) in *Senzaishū*, Separation no. 537:

this.<sup>13</sup> Minamoto Yorimasa of the third rank called it Mount Long-Night [Sayanonaga yama].<sup>14</sup> This time, when I asked an old man who I happened by there, without hesitation, he answered simply, “Mount Midnight [Sayanonaka yama].”

|                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Koko ha mata</i>    | When once again           |
| <i>izuku to toheba</i> | I ask what is this place, |
| <i>amabiko no</i>      | the voices echo           |
| <i>kotafuru koe mo</i> | clearly in response:      |
| <i>Sayanonaka yama</i> | Mount Midnight.           |

Before long, I crossed Mount Utsu in Suruga Province.<sup>15</sup> The ivy-covered road, still green with young leaves, made me think ahead to the crimson leaves of autumn.

|                           |                                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Momiji seba</i>        | When the leaves turn color        |
| <i>yume to ya naran</i>   | they will be like a dream,        |
| <i>Utsu no yama</i>       | these things I see in reality:    |
| <i>utsutsu ni mitsuru</i> | the greenery of Mount Utsu,       |
| <i>tsuta no aoba mo</i>   | the young leaves on the ivy, too. |

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|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <i>Tabinesuru</i>           | Sleeping on the road,                   |
| <i>ko no shita tsuyu no</i> | my sleeves                              |
| <i>sode ni mata</i>         | heavy with the dew beneath the trees,   |
| <i>shigure furu nari</i>    | are soaked again in the autumn rain     |
| <i>Sayanonaka yama</i>      | Midnight on Mount Sayanonaka. (KT, 152) |

**13** Extant poems in imperial and private poetic anthologies suggest that both variations on the name were equally common, from the times of the *Kokinshū* (905), the first imperially ordered anthology, at least until the fourteenth century.

**14** Minamoto Yorimasa's (1104–1180) poem appears in the 1310 poetry collection *Fubokushō*, Winter III no. 7205:

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Tsumorikeru</i>        | Is it simply the snow                         |
| <i>yuki bakari ka ha</i>  | that has already piled up,                    |
| <i>ko no ma yori</i>      | or is it a fresh snowfall filtering down      |
| <i>tsuki mo shigururu</i> | through the branches with the moonlight,      |
| <i>Sayanonaga yama</i>    | all night long on Mount Sayanonaga? (ZKT 446) |

The name “Sayanonaga yama” changes the literal meaning from “midnight” to “long night”. In either case, the name suggests a period of darkness, and the visual imagery of nighttime and being unable to see reflect this.

**15** Mount Utsu has been an *utamakura* site ever since its appearance in the *Tales of Ise* 9:

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Suruga naru</i>        | In Suruga                                 |
| <i>Utsu no yamabe no</i>  | around Mount Utsu                         |
| <i>utsutsu ni mo</i>      | I do not see a soul,                      |
| <i>yume ni mo hito ni</i> | neither in reality                        |
| <i>awanu narikeri</i>     | nor in my dreams. (KT, 887; SNKBT 17, 89) |

The name Utsu is a near homophone of the word “reality” (*utsutsu*), making it a common pairing of words. See also note 58 on the poem's context in the *Ise monogatari*

I stayed at the Kiyomi Barrier,<sup>16</sup> and left while the night was still deep, thinking:

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Kiyomi gata</i>        | Kiyomi Bay   |
| <i>nami no tozashi mo</i> | is a locked gate, opening up                         |
| <i>akete yuku</i>         | for the dawning light upon its waves—                |
| <i>tsuki wo ba ika ni</i> | why doesn't the guard stop the wandering moon        |
| <i>yoha no sekimori</i>   | as it crosses the Barrier at midnight? <sup>17</sup> |

I have heard there are days when they don't rise up, these waves of Tago Bay, but in no time my traveling sleeves have begun dripping with brine as waves mingled with tears at the hardship of this journey.<sup>18</sup>

When I look over at Mount Fuji in the distance, it is shrouded thickly in mist, and I can't see in any way that the mountain knows no time.<sup>19</sup> Reflecting the morning sun, the snow on the tall peak looked exceedingly beautiful—it was as a mirror suspended in the sky, difficult for this brush of mine to put down into words.

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Toki shiranu</i>      | Oblivious to season,                |
| <i>na wo sahe komete</i> | even its name                       |
| <i>kasumu nari</i>       | is shrouded in mist                 |
| <i>Fuji no takane no</i> | the high peak, hazy in the daybreak |
| <i>haru no akebono</i>   | of an early spring.                 |

|                         |                              |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Fuji no ne no</i>    | The smoke                    |
| <i>kemuri no sue ha</i> | over Fuji's peak             |
| <i>taenishi wo</i>      | has faded,                   |
| <i>furikeru yuki ya</i> | but the snow that has fallen |
| <i>kiesezaruran</i>     | will never disappear.        |

<sup>16</sup> An *utamakura* site in Suruga Province

<sup>17</sup> This poem purposely entangles the images of the guards and locked gate of Kiyomi Barrier with the movements of the setting moon and rising sun over the bay. The word “dawning” (*aketeyuku*) is homophonous with “opening”, and is an associated word with “lock”.

<sup>18</sup> This line recreates the imagery in an anonymous poem in the *Kokinshū*, Love I no. 489:

|                           |                                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Suruga naru</i>        | Though there may be days          |
| <i>Tago no ura name</i>   | the waves do not rise up          |
| <i>tatanu hi ha</i>       | in Tago Bay at Suruga,            |
| <i>aredomo kimi wo</i>    | there is not a day                |
| <i>kohinu hi ha nashi</i> | I do not feel your love. (KT, 11) |

<sup>19</sup> An allusion to the *Tales of Ise* 9:

|                           |                                  |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Toki shiranu</i>       | The mountain that knows no time  |
| <i>yama ha Fuji no ne</i> | is Fuji's peak—                  |
| <i>itsu to te ka</i>      | when is it now,                  |
| <i>ka no ko madara ni</i> | its slopes speckled              |
| <i>yuki no fururamu</i>   | with snow like a fawn? (KT, 887) |

The mist Sokyū sees tells him that the mountain is surrounded by a natural phenomenon that is associated with springtime in poetry, and so cannot be immune to time or season.

From there I crossed Ukishima Plain, and paid homage to Hakone Shrine. Truly, if it were not for the clearly manifest vow of the Gongen, I did not comprehend how there could be water at the peak of this mountain—it was quite mysterious. It is this place where spirits of the departed wander in this world, so it is said.<sup>20</sup> In general, there were many uncanny things about its atmosphere. There is a constant wind tearing at the waves, and it fills one with dread and wonder to look upon the place.

|                         |                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Hakone ji ya</i>     | The mountain road to Hakone—       |
| <i>mizu umi aruru</i>   | the mountain wind,                 |
| <i>yamakaze ni</i>      | raging over the lake,              |
| <i>akeyaranu yo no</i>  | makes clear the wretchedness       |
| <i>usa zo shiraruru</i> | of the unending darkness of night. |

Then I came to a place in Sagami province called Kamakura Yama-no-uchi, located near Enkaku-ji Temple, and called upon a former acquaintance in the area. When I heard that he had passed on to the next world, I briefly looked at the condition of the place where he had used to live, which made me all the more aware of the emptiness of this world.

|                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Mishi hito no</i>      | I called on my old friend      |
| <i>koke no shita naru</i> | and found only traces          |
| <i>ato toheba</i>         | under the moss—                |
| <i>sora yuku tsuki mo</i> | even the moon crossing the sky |
| <i>naho kasumu nari</i>   | mists over for a moment.       |

I looked for lodging in the area and stayed for some time. When one of the many traveling monks at the inn told me of a sage on Mount Takaoka of Hitachi Province, I went to call on that sage. He lived in a temple called Hōun-ji, and was called Recluse Shūki.<sup>21</sup> He was one of Priest Kūgan's leading disciples, and had also studied long in China under the Priest Chūbō at Mount Tenmoku.<sup>22</sup> I thought,

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**20** Sōkyū attributes the existence of Lake Ashi, the “water at the peak” of the mountain, to the Hakone Gongen, deities of Hakone Shrine and avatars of Monju, Miroku, and Kannon bodhisattva. Sōkyū's language in this passage imagines Mount Hakone as a gateway to the beyond, which provides passage for spirits of the dead who have become lost, allowing them to find release from the world of the living. The poem that follows it suggests enlightenment in the sense of awakening from ignorance through Buddhist teaching.

**21** Hōun-ji is one of the great Zen temples of the Kantō region. The monk who Sōkyū visits, the recluse Shūki Anju (lit. “Shūki who lives in a Hut”), is in all likelihood Fukuan Sōki (1280–1358), the temple's founder.

**22** Priest Kūgan may be another name for Zen Priest Kakuman, the sixth patriarch of Enpuku-ji Temple. Chinese Zen Priest Chūbō is better known as Chūō Myōhon (1263–1323). Tianmushan (J. Tenmoku-san) is a mountainous region in northwest Zhejiang Province (J. Sekkōshō), where

“If one is going to withdraw from the world, this is the surely the way” so I built a three-foot grass hut and spent the summer there on Mount Takaoka.

There was another recluse, who had been living in the mountains for quite some time in Mount Tokusa of Kai Province, and when I heard about him, I went to call on him in his cave. I stayed there for a little while, and then returned to Hitachi Province again, spending my days traversing the endless road of Musashi Plains. That night there were many monks on the road, and everyone bundled temporary grass pillows together in preparation for spending the night on the roadside. These plains have long been known for its robbers, so much so that they appear in the poem “Please do not set fire today”. While I didn’t expect the place to remain so true to its reputation, they tore at our mossy robes and roared away like white waves into the ocean, making my itinerant bed all the more miserable.<sup>23</sup>

|                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Itohazu ha</i>        | If I didn’t hate this world, |
| <i>kakaramashi ya ha</i> | would I be suffering so?     |
| <i>tsuyu no mi no</i>    | This dew-like life,          |
| <i>uki ni mo kienu</i>   | its melancholy never fades   |
| <i>Musashino no hara</i> | Musashino Plains.            |

After that, I wandered around visiting sages here and there. There was a peripatetic who had lived for many years on Mount Chichibu, and who wouldn’t go to the village, even briefly. The villagers called him by such names as the Bearded Monk, and no one knew where he was from, nor what sort of person he was, and I spent the winter with him. When the seasons turned to spring, I crossed over to Kanzuke Province where, quite unexpectedly, there was a person who provided me lodgings for a night.<sup>24</sup>

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there is a large Buddhist temple complex. There was also a region in present-day Yamanashi Prefecture that was called Tenmoku-san. In this region, one Priest Gōkai Honjō (d. 1352) established Seiun-ji Temple on Mount Tokusa, where Sōkyū next visits.

**23** “Mossy” suggests the dark color of his monk’s robes. “White waves” is a euphemism for robbers. Perhaps the strong winds of the open plains, pulling roughly at his robes, reminds Sōkyū of the infamous brigands from the legend of Yamato Takeru, alluded to in the poem from *Tales of Ise* 12, which Sōkyū quotes above:

|                           |                                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Musashino ha</i>       | Do not set fire to it today!    |
| <i>kefu ha na yaki so</i> | Among the green grasses of      |
| <i>wakakusa no</i>        | Musashi Plains                  |
| <i>tsuma mo komoreri</i>  | my young beloved is hidden,     |
| <i>ware mo komoreri</i>   | and I am hidden, too. (KT, 888) |

**24** This spring marks the beginning of the third year since the opening of the diary, and the second year since Sōkyū had set out from the Capital. Kanzuke Province, usually pronounced Kōzuke, is roughly equivalent to present-day Gunma Prefecture.



It was early in the third month—the plum tree that stood near the eaves of the house had lost most of its blossoms, and the moon shining hazily through the bare branches gave a refined atmosphere to the scene. The pine pillars and woven bamboo fence imparted an air of rustic, time-honored beauty to the place. The owner of the house, who looked as though he came from a fine lineage despite living in the country, came out to meet me. He was sympathetic to the sorrows of my journey, and expressed great interest in the moment that I first grew weary of the world, and other such things.

He said, “I am not oblivious to the transience of this world, but this body of mine is hopelessly bound to it, so I have spent my days with little more than the intention to turn away from it. Even after hearing your story tonight, I am alarmed by the persistent idleness of my heart that cannot discard the world.” He continued, “You must stay here for a while and recover from this road-weariness.” But in the end, I left, explaining that I had some urgent business, and promising to return in the autumn.

That autumn, in the eighth month, I set out for his home with eager anticipation, having thought of him often since our last meeting. But when I called, I found that he had died; and hearing that his seventh-day memorial service was taking place that very day, I was overcome with the inexpressible frailty of life. I couldn’t help but wonder why I didn’t hurry just a little to visit him. I was dismayed to think that he had expected me with such warmth—though we live in a world of deceit, how empty he must have thought my promises. I asked how he was at the end, and they said, “He spoke of you, even up until the moment of his passing,” and I wept, together with all those who had been left behind. It was not a shock as though learning of it for the first time, but it made real for me how swiftly death overtakes our bodies, which require so many earthly things.

Of the many things he loved, his heart swelled with the waves of the Bay of Poetry [Waka no ura].<sup>25</sup> When the people told me this, I too turned to poetry, my own longest cherished passion. Guided by my heart in a final dedication to my friend, I wrote a fragment of my thoughts on the wall of the inn and then left.

A little after the tenth day of the third month, following the scent of the plum blossoms along the long road through the wilderness, and beneath the eaves of a country bower, I got caught up in the pleasure of gazing at the moon. All night my host and I talked about times past and present, reciting poetry to each other and, finding respite from thoughts of my journey, my heart began to linger in this borrowed lodging. And yet I took my leave, hastening to the distant clouds of my next destination, promising that we would be reunited under the autumn moon.

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<sup>25</sup> An *utamakura*, Waka no ura and its waves are synonymous with *waka*, or Japanese poetry, making this a way of saying that the man was devoted to composing poetry.

But I have come to visit this place once again, determined not to break an old promise, only to discover that this person has already passed from the world. Unable to see for a second time the face I knew from that single night, my breast is ablaze with yearning, and my sleeves are soaked with longing tears. I know no other way to outwardly manifest my grief, the sorrow stirring like a seed within my heart. Even if it is said to be a mistaken game of decorative words, can it not be linked distantly to glorifying Buddha?<sup>26</sup>

*Sode nurasu  
nageki no moto wo  
kite toheba  
suginishi haru no  
mume no shita kaze*

I come to call at this place  
of sleeve-drenching sorrow.  
Already the wind has swept  
beneath the plum tree  
of that spring, now past.

*Yū kaze yo  
tsuki ni fukinase  
mishi hito no  
wakemayofuran  
kusa no kage wo mo*

Evening breeze!  
Carry the moonlight down,  
illuminate the shadows,  
cut a path where my friend parts  
the deep grasses, surely losing his way.

Thinking this world of dust to be all the more wretched, walking, not deciding upon a direction but wandering, lost, I passed through many places such as Muro no Yashima, which resonated deeply within me.<sup>27</sup>

It had been spring when I left the Capital, and so when I crossed the Shirakawa Barrier at the end of autumn, I couldn't help but agree with Priest Nōin of Kosobe, who composed the poem,

*Miyako wo ba  
kasumi to tomo ni  
tachishikado  
akikaze zo fuku  
Shirakawa no seki*

I left the Capital  
with the rising mists of spring,  
but now it is the autumn wind  
that is blowing –  
Shirakawa Barrier.

Nōin

and I think that what he says is true.

---

**26** Sōkyū prefaces his two poems with an explanation that poetry is the only way he knows to express the emotions he feels. The “seed” is a reference to the Kana Preface of the *Kokinshū*, which describes poetry as the flowering of the seeds of thought and intention within a person's heart. The phrase “mistaken game of decorative words” is a reference to criticism of poetry as “mad words and fictitious phrases” (*kyōgen kigo*) from the point of view that it distracts one from the Buddhist Truth (SNKBT 87).

**27** Muro no Yashima is a shrine in Shimotsuke Province, present-day Tochigi Prefecture. A nearby lake is known for its mists that look like smoke rising up, and so it was an *utamakura* site from at least the twelfth century.

It has been said that, unfortunately, our Nōin probably did not compose his poem on site. Rather, under the pretense of going down to the Eastern country, he was hiding away at home, and later presented the poem as one that he had written while visiting that distant province. He must have actually gone there at least once, to have written such a thing as *Record of the Eight Hundred Islands*.<sup>28</sup> Although I don't go so far as to comb water through my hair like Takeda no Kuniyuki, one should at least change one's mood before passing through this place, even if it is feigned slightly, like applying makeup to the heart. But I did not, and crossed the Barrier in poor spirits.<sup>29</sup>

|                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Miyako ni mo</i>      | In the Capital, too,         |
| <i>ima ya fukuramu</i>   | it must be blowing even now— |
| <i>aki kaze no</i>       | the autumn wind              |
| <i>mi ni shimiwataru</i> | that permeates my very body  |
| <i>Shirakawa no seki</i> | at Shirakawa Barrier.        |

From there I crossed to the Dewa Province and, going around to look at the Akoya Pine and other such places, I worked my way across the Asaka Moors in Michinoku Province.<sup>30</sup>

When Middle Captain Sanekata went to Michinoku, there were no irises, and so, because it says in the authoritative text to decorate the eaves with water grasses, he told the people to use water oat, as they were the same thing after all.<sup>31</sup> In the seventh year of the Kanji period [1093], at an iris root competition held by Ikuhōmon-in, Fujiwara Takayoshi wrote in his poem:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>Ayame kusa</i>        | Oh, irises,                            |
| <i>hiku te mo tayuku</i> | when our arms grow tired from pulling  |
| <i>nagaki ne no</i>      | such long roots,                       |
| <i>ikade asaka no</i>    | how do you grow in such shallow waters |
| <i>numa ni oiken</i>     | of Asaka Moor? <sup>32</sup>           |

Takayoshi

<sup>28</sup> *Record of the Eight Hundred Islands* (*Yaoshima no ki*) is a diary attributed to Nōin, but that is no longer extant.

<sup>29</sup> Takeda no Tayū Kuniyuki, a poet and musician of the Heian, and an officer of the fifth rank in the imperial court. He is said to have changed his clothes before crossing the Shirakawa Barrier upon inspiration from Nōin's poem. Traveler-poet Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694) refers to this anecdote in his masterpiece, *Narrow Road to Oku* (ca. 1690).

<sup>30</sup> The Akoya Pine and Asaka Moors are both *utamakura* sites.

<sup>31</sup> Fujiwara no Sanekata (d. 998), a statesman and celebrated poet of the mid-Heian period, was exiled to Michinoku.

<sup>32</sup> Fujiwara Takayoshi, a statesman of the mid-Heian, composed this poem on the occasion of an iris root competition, one type of courtly entertainment at the time. Ikuhōmon-in (1076–1096) was the daughter of Retired Emperor Shirakawa (1053–1129).

Because of this poem, I have long doubted that no irises grow in the area, so while I was there, I asked someone about it. He told me, “It’s not that there are no irises here. However, on the occasion of his arrival, the Middle Captain [Sanekata] said, ‘Why should these peasants, who know nothing of style, ornament their eaves with irises in imitation of the Capital?’ So he made them use water oat to decorate their eaves instead. Ever since, this has become our custom.” And when he said this, I thought, “Well, of course, that is one interpretation.” In such works as the gazetteers, too, there are written the words of the elders of that province, and I thought, “There are those kinds of views, too,” and made note of it.<sup>33</sup>

Presently, I asked this person for directions, and then went toward a village called Yamada. On the coast, there was a grass hut that had been made without any pretensions to artistry, but because its master was living in awareness of the sorrows of this world, I stayed there. It was after the tenth day of the ninth month, and I could hear, mingled with the stormy winds blowing down from the mountains behind, the calls of the deer nearby. In front of the hut, I watched the moonlight as it played upon the waves that stretched wide before me in the deepening night, and my mind was clarified to hear “the plovers’ cries endlessly overlapping” as they called to their mates.<sup>34</sup>

When dawn broke, I set out across a wide plain, and when I asked its name, they said, “Why, this is the Running Springs [Hashiri-i].” I heard that it was called this because travelers would hurry along, not just traveling quickly, but actually running, because of the many opportunities for mountain bandits to kill or harm them as they traversed the long, remote road with no familiar people to meet.<sup>35</sup>

At times I would spread out my solitary mat in the terrible gales of the mountain ridge, or lie down in the dew of the fields; at times I would be awakened from my dreams by the waves beating upon the shore, or dampen

---

<sup>33</sup> The gazetteers (*fūdoki*) mentioned here indicate a category of texts, rather than a single work titled *Fūdoki*.

<sup>34</sup> A reference to a poem by Yamabe no Akahito (fl. 724–736) in *Man’yōshū* 6: 925:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>Nubatama no</i>       | In the glistening darkness                             |
| <i>yo no fukeyukeba</i>  | of the deepening night,                                |
| <i>hisaki ofuru</i>      | where the yellow catalpa grows                         |
| <i>kiyoki kahara ni</i>  | on the shore of the clear river,                       |
| <i>chidori shibanaku</i> | the plovers’ cries endlessly overlapping. (KT, 726–27) |

<sup>35</sup> The name Running Springs plays on the meanings of the spring water running swiftly and powerfully, and of travelers rushing to cross the wide plains. This is almost certainly a different place than the more famous Running Springs located near the Ōsaka Barrier. Sōkyū emphasizes this difference when he notes the absence of familiar people along that remote road, in contrast to the “Meeting Barrier” at Ōsaka.

my sleeves on my bed of floating sleep. When I happened to hear the weak call of a cricket coming from beside my grass pillow, I realized that the time had come for the last leaves of autumn. As I became accustomed to the grass mats used by the fisher folk, so too, I came to know the workings of the tide by looking to the moon moving through the sky.<sup>36</sup>

Thus proceeding distractedly and without destination, about twenty days after I had crossed the Shirakawa Barrier, I came to the shore of a wide river. Remarkably, this was the Abukuma River. This was the name of a place that had sounded so remote when I was in the Capital, and it made me realize what a great distance I had come.<sup>37</sup> The ferry pulled to shore, and I hurried to board with the other travelers.<sup>38</sup> I looked out far over the water, and at one point there was smoke rising up out of the middle of the densely layered mountains. When I asked the others about this, someone said, “Ever since the Kamakura fell in the

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36 The phrase “floating sleep” suggests both floating in and out of sleep because of a troubled mind, and the danger of his pillow floating away in his copious tears. The phrase also suggests sleeping atop the water, as waterfowl do, referring literally to sleeping on a boat, which is another common hardship of travel at this time.

37 Abukuma is an *utamakura* from its earliest appearance in *Kokinshū*, Poems of the East, no. 1087 (poet unknown), “A verse composed in Michinoku”:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>Abukuma ni</i>        | At Abukuma,                              |
| <i>kiri tachikumori</i>  | where the mist rises up in clouds        |
| <i>akenu to mo</i>       | even if it clears, even when day breaks, |
| <i>kimi wo ba yaraji</i> | I will not let you go,                   |
| <i>mateba subenashi</i>  | I cannot bear to wait. (KT, 22)          |

38 The events and phrasing here recall *Tales of Ise* 9, “Journey to the East”, in which the traveling party reaches the shore of the Sumida River:

“The party approached the edge of the river and waited together. As they were thinking of the Capital, realizing with sorrow what a great distance they had come, the ferry driver called ‘Come quickly, board my boat, the sun is setting.’ They were boarding the ferry to cross, and they all felt helpless, for there was not one among the party who had not left a loved one in the Capital. At that moment, there was a white bird with a red beak and legs, about the same size as a snipe, that was skipping across the water and eating fish. Because it was a bird that one does not see in the Capital, it was unfamiliar to all of them. When they asked the ferry driver, he responded, ‘That is a Capital bird.’ The man heard this and composed:

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <i>Na ni shi ohaba</i>     | If that is your name,                      |
| <i>iza koto tohamu</i>     | I ask you,                                 |
| <i>miyakodori</i>          | Capital bird,                              |
| <i>wa ga omofu hito ha</i> | is my beloved                              |
| <i>ari ya nashi ya to</i>  | yet living, or no more?” (SNKBT 17, 89–90) |

There is also a connection between the *Ise* poet’s concern for loved ones in the Capital, and Sōkyū’s discussion of the smoke rising from the mountains beyond, which follows.

Genkō War, this column of smoke has never disappeared, to this very day.” An extraordinary tale, indeed.<sup>39</sup>

I got off the boat, and there, next to the road that I was traveling, was a single burial mound. On a tree next to it were written many poems in Chinese and Japanese, and I presumed it to be the work of people coming and going on that road, but someone told me, “This is the grave of the Chinese ancient, Prince Tōhei. He died here yearning for his homeland, and so the grasses and trees that grow on top of the mound all lean toward the west.”<sup>40</sup> I was quite moved by this, and thought of Shōkun, upon whose “green grave” even the color of the grass was changed.<sup>41</sup> Everyone believes that he who dies on a journey, after becoming the “smoke from a midnight pyre,” will drift toward his homeland, but I suppose that is a misguided delusion of this vain floating world.<sup>42</sup> On top of the burial mound, there were many pine trees growing, and it struck me that they must be Unai pines. I remembered the examples of the old tales<sup>43</sup>:

|                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Furusato ha</i>        | My old home –                 |
| <i>ge ni ika nareba</i>   | how is it that                |
| <i>yume to naru</i>       | after it becomes but a dream, |
| <i>nochi sahe naho mo</i> | even then                     |
| <i>wasurezaruran</i>      | I still cannot forget?        |

**39** The Genkō War lasted for the entire Genkō era (1331–1333), and ended when the Kamakura Shogunate was defeated by the army of Nitta Yoshisada (1301–1338). This event is in the very recent past for Sōkyū, who is traveling around 1350–1352.

**40** Prince Dongping (J. Tōhei d. 78 C. E) was the son of Emperor Guangwu (J. Kōbutei 6 B.C.E – 57 C. E.). He is said to have lived permanently in Japan, as is reflected in Sōkyū’s account of the prince’s death and burial in Japan. This gravesite is in fact located on the shore of the Natori River, and not the Abukuma River.

**41** Wang Zhaojun (J. Ō Shōkun 1st c. B. C. E), one of “Four great beauties” of Chinese history, was promised to a neighboring king by an emperor of Han. Forced to live in a desert kingdom, she longed so desperately for home that after her death green grasses grew on top of her grave, which came to be known as the “green grave”. Her story is recorded in poetry of the *Shi jing* (*Book of Odes* J. *Shikyō*) and the *Tang shi* (J. *Tōshi*).

**42** The “smoke from a midnight pyre” comes from a poem by Kazan-in in the *Go shūishū* Travel, no. 503:

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Tabi no sora</i>       | On a journey –                                     |
| <i>yoha no keburī to</i>  | smoke from a midnight pyre,                        |
| <i>noborinaba</i>         | drifting up in the sky,                            |
| <i>ama no moshiohi</i>    | looks as though the fisher folk                    |
| <i>taku ka to ya mimu</i> | are burning their salt and seaweed fires. (KT, 94) |

**43** Unai pines appear, for example, in the “Maboroshi” chapter of the *Tale of Genji* (1008, Murasaki Shikibu).

I continued on, and slept on the road in the shadow of the Takekuma Pines, losing myself in thought at the moon shining between its two trunks.<sup>44</sup> I crossed the Natorigawa River, and was moved at the thought of its waters flowing along, never to return. The “dew beneath the trees” of Miyagino Plains, too, was so heavy that I scarcely had time to pull out my rain hat.<sup>45</sup> All the different flowers looked like a rich brocade spread out before me. In their midst, in the place called Motoara Village, I broke off a single branch of the bush clover, the color of which excelled all others, all the while thinking,

|                            |                                      |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Miyagino no</i>         | When did Motoara Village,            |
| <i>hagi no na ni tatsu</i> | like its namesake                    |
| <i>Motoara no</i>          | bush clover                          |
| <i>sato ha itsu yori</i>   | of the Miyagino Plains,              |
| <i>are hajime kemu</i>     | begin to grow so wild? <sup>46</sup> |

People lived in this place long ago, but now it has become a plain entirely overgrown with brush, and I could see nothing but a single grass hut. I was touched to think of the sorrow that people felt long ago at the falling of these

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44 The Takekuma Pines, Miyagino Plains, and Natorigawa River are important *utamakura* sites. Takekuma Pines, also called the Twin Pines, grows on the northern shore of Abukuma River, and from its shared roots, the pines split into two trunks. There is a famous poem by Priest Nōin in the *Go shūishū* (1087), Miscellaneous IV, no 1043:

|                           |                                    |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Takekuma no</i>        | Takekuma Pines —                   |
| <i>matsu ha kono tabi</i> | on this journey there is no trace. |
| <i>ato mo nashi</i>       | Is it that I have come again       |
| <i>chitose wo hete ya</i> | after one thousand years           |
| <i>ware ha kitaramu</i>   | have already gone by? (KT, 108)    |

45 This is an allusion to an anonymous poem in *Kokinshū*, Poems on the East, no. 1091:

|                             |                                   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Misaburai</i>            | My lord                           |
| <i>mikasa to mofuse</i>     | calls for a rain hat              |
| <i>Miyagino no</i>          | on Miyagino Plains                |
| <i>ko no shita tsuyu ha</i> | the dew beneath the trees         |
| <i>ame ni masareri</i>      | is as heavy as rainfall. (KT, 22) |

46 The origins of the *utamakura* Motoara Village is uncertain but for its use in *Kokinshū* Love IV, no. 694 (poet unknown):

|                           |                                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Miyagino no</i>        | The dew hangs heavily               |
| <i>Motoara no kohagi</i>  | from the bush clover of Motoara     |
| <i>tsuyu wo omomi</i>     | on Miyagino Plains                  |
| <i>kaze wo matsu koto</i> | it longs for the wind on its leaves |
| <i>kimi wo koso mate</i>  | just as I long for you. (KT, 14)    |

flowers.<sup>47</sup> I have heard that, from the beginning, the bush clover of Motoara are said to bloom on the old branches left after the spring burning of the plains from the previous year. There is also a bush clover that is called a tree, whose branches are bare, and knobbier than ordinary bush clover. I believe that this tree has been called the Motoara cherry in poems, but now that I am making inquiries about the places I visit, it occurs to me that it must take its name from the village.<sup>48</sup>

After that, I came to Taga, the provincial seat of Michinoku. From there I followed what they called the Narrow Road to Oku southward to go and see Sue no Matsuyama.<sup>49</sup> When I looked over the vast expanse of the pine forest, it truly seemed as though “the waves engulfed the pines.”<sup>50</sup> Even the “the fisher folk in their boats” appeared to be crossing a sea of treetops.<sup>51</sup>

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**47** Sōkyū's sadness is in part because now the people too, are gone, while only the bush clover remain, with no one to appreciate the blossoms or to mourn their falling. This is a reference to a poem by Fujiwara no Koretada in *Shūishū* Sorrow, no. 1279:

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>Inishihe ha</i>         | Long ago                                  |
| <i>chiru wo ya hito no</i> | the people felt sorrow                    |
| <i>oshimikemu</i>          | at their falling,                         |
| <i>hana koso ima ha</i>    | now it is the flowers                     |
| <i>mukashi kofurashi</i>   | that long for that distant past. (KT, 79) |

**48** The twisted, knobby branches suggest human cultivation at some point, another reminder that the inhabitants once attentive to their beauty have since disappeared. The different names that Sōkyū mentions are homophonous, but differ in meaning: wild bush clover and bush clover trees. The most famous example of the Motoara cherry in poetry is by Sone no Yoshitada (early Heian), in *Fubokushō* (1310) Spring IV, no. 1071:

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <i>Waga yado no</i>      | Though it does not bloom—                 |
| <i>Motoara no sakura</i> | the Motoara cherry                        |
| <i>Sakanedomo</i>        | by my temporary lodging—                  |
| <i>kokoro wo kakete</i>  | I look with more feeling                  |
| <i>miereba tanomoshi</i> | and am heartened by what I see. (ZKT 338) |

**49** Sue no Matsuyama is an *utamakura*. The “Narrow Road to Oku [the interior]” refers here to a portion of the road from Sendai to Taga. This phrase is later made famous by Matsuo Bashō's *Narrow Road to Oku*.

**50** An allusion to the anonymous poem in *Kokinshū* Poems of the East, no. 1093:

|                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Kimi wo okite</i>    | If I had such a fickle heart  |
| <i>adashigokoro wo</i>  | as to spurn my beloved,       |
| <i>waga motaba</i>      | ocean waves would surely      |
| <i>Sue no Matsuyama</i> | engulf the pines              |
| <i>nami mo koenamu</i>  | of Sue no Matsuyama. (KT, 22) |

The image of waves engulfing the treetops of Sue no Matsuyama is presented as an impossibility, in a declaration of undying love.

**51** An allusion to a poem by Jakuren (d. 1202) in *Shinkokinshū* Miscellaneous II, no. 1601:



|                         |                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Yūhi sasu</i>        | Evening sunlight                   |
| <i>Sue no Matsuyama</i> | at Sue no Matsuyama                |
| <i>kiri harete</i>      | perforates the treetops,           |
| <i>akikaze kayofu</i>   | mist clears as autumn wind         |
| <i>nami no uhe kana</i> | skirts over the tops of the waves. |

Just as the sun was setting, I arrived at Shiogama Bay. The sacred symbol of Shiogama Shrine is manifested as a salt cauldron, and I spent the night praying before it. There was a road with a tall bridge that crossed over an inlet facing the eastern side of the bay. Another road skirted the waterside, and there was also a road running along the mountain, fully in its shadow. The smoke rising up from all the houses of the fishermen, built in rows one after another, looked like it might be from the salt fires. The mooring lines of the boats paddling through the bay were strings pulling at my heart from this place.<sup>52</sup> I could hear the bracing sound of the slapping oars in the moonlight of the deepening night, and felt very lonely. A man of old said, “Among the more than sixty provinces of our emperor, there is no place that can be said to resemble Shiogama,”<sup>53</sup> and I thought it so:

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|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <i>Waka no ura wo</i>       | If I look at Waka Bay                     |
| <i>matsu no ha koshi ni</i> | as though its waves                       |
| <i>nagamureba</i>           | have overtaken the pines,                 |
| <i>kosue ni yosuru</i>      | then they are rowing across the treetops  |
| <i>ama no tsurifune</i>     | the fisher folk in their boats. (KT, 202) |

52 In the phrase “pulling at my heart,” pulling is an associated poetic word for the mooring line of a boat, an image from *Kokinshū* Poems of the East, no. 1088:

|                           |                                  |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Michinoku ha</i>       | All of Michinoku is so,          |
| <i>izuku ha aredo</i>     | but it is especially in Shiogama |
| <i>Shiogama no</i>        | that the mooring lines           |
| <i>ura kogu fune no</i>   | of boats rowing across the bay   |
| <i>tsunade kanashi mo</i> | inspire such sadness. (KT, 22)   |

53 A reference to the *Tales of Ise* 81, which tells of an old man who comes across a poetry party in the garden of a mansion on the Kamo River in the Capital. The man, who is charmed by the beauty of the scene and the people’s poems, responds:

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Shiogama ni</i>       | Could it be that I have come        |
| <i>itsu ka kinikemu</i>  | to Shiogama somehow?                |
| <i>asanagi ni</i>        | If only, in the morning calm,       |
| <i>tsurisuru fune ha</i> | the fishing boats                   |
| <i>koko ni yoranan</i>   | would come in to <i>this</i> place. |

“He composed this poem. Because he had been to Michinoku, he had seen many places both strange and interesting, but among the more than sixty provinces of our emperor, there is no place that can be said to resemble Shiogama. This is why the old man, who was so touched by the scene before him, wondered whether he had somehow come to Shiogama.” (SNKBT 17, 156–157)

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Ariake no</i>           | With the dawn moon receding |
| <i>tsuki to tomo ni ya</i> | over Shiogama Bay,          |
| <i>Shiogama no</i>         | the boats follow,           |
| <i>ura kogu fune mo</i>    | rowing farther,             |
| <i>tōzakaruramu</i>        | farther from shore.         |

From there, I went along the bay to visit Pine Islands [Matsushima]. It looked too elegant a place for fishermen to be making their homes. This is the site of the temple Enpuku-ji, which was founded by Zen Priest Kakuman, and which is said to be inhabited by one hundred monks.<sup>54</sup> From the vantage point of the temple, Shiogama Bay stretches to the south. It has been called Thousand Isles [Chishima], and the islands were indeed so numerous as to appear truly infinite. In the expanse of sea that separated the one called Far-Offshore Island [Okino Tōjima] from where I stood, I could see many other islands. On an island set off to the east of the Pine Islands, accessible by a bridge, there was one temple called the Hall of Five Nobles [Godai-dō], which, as its name suggests, enshrines the Five Wisdom Kings.<sup>55</sup>

There was a narrow path paved with stones that followed the rocky shore, in the shadow of the eastern-facing mountains. When I went along it to take a look, there were trees growing at sharp angles from a promontory, their tops sprayed on both sides by the ocean waves. The boats passing by looked altogether to be crossing through the green of the lower branches. From there just a little distance away was a small island, and this itself was none other than Small Island [Ojima].<sup>56</sup> It was accessible by a rope stretched between the islands, along which a small boat was traveling back and forth. In the temple the welcoming procession [*raigō*] of Amida Nyōrai, Kanzeon Bosatsu, and Seishi Bosatsu was installed, as was the Jizō Bodhisatva. I went south from Small Island, just one *chō* [109 meters] away, and there was a place of exceeding sacred beauty, thick with pines and bamboo, and deep with moss. For the people of this land, the bones of the departed are laid to rest here. Moreover, one could see scattered hair fasteners, from the topknots that had been cut off by those taking the Buddhist vows. I was deeply moved, and because I thought my mind would be purified here, I stayed for two or three days.

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<sup>54</sup> Zen Priest Kakuman served in 1306–1308 as the sixth generation priest of Empuku-ji, now known as Zuigan-ji in present-day Miyagi Prefecture.

<sup>55</sup> In the Mikkyō School of Buddhism, the Five Wisdom Kings and their respective directions are Fudō (center), Gōzanze (east), Kundari (south), Daiitoku (west), and Kongōyasha (north).

<sup>56</sup> Ojima is a famous island of Matsushima [Pine Islands] and an *utamakura* site.

|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Dare to naki</i>      | Those unknown departed        |
| <i>wakare no kazu wo</i> | appear as countless           |
| <i>Matsushima ya</i>     | as the islands of Matsushima, |
| <i>Ojima no iso no</i>   | as the number of tears shed   |
| <i>namida ni zo miru</i> | on the beaches of Ojima.      |

I felt that it was time, now, to focus upon that road I had first traveled, and I found myself back in Musashino Plains. Here, quite unexpectedly, I came across a person from the Capital who asked me about such things as the Way of Poetry [Uta no michi]. Moreover, I met a few of my former acquaintances, and I was so overjoyed that I ended up accompanying them. When we went to the Horikane Well,<sup>57</sup> I really felt that this would become the most memorable part of my travels. I thought that this must be as when Priest Sosei met Narihira on Mount Utsu.<sup>58</sup>

In the end, because it would have been a pity to pass by such a renowned place as Sue no Matsuyama with nothing more than a passing glance as I went along the road, I thought it would be nice to keep some memorabilia, like those men of old who took with them the wood chip from Nagara Bridge, or the dried frog from Ide.<sup>59</sup> While I was raking up some fallen pine needles, there were among them the type of pinecone that is called a “pine-rainhat” [matsukasa],<sup>60</sup>

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57 An *utamakura* associated with Musashino Plains.

58 Priest Sosei (early Heian), a celebrated poet, is presumed here to be the monk who happens to meet Ariwara no Narihira in *Tales of Ise* no. 9. Note that the context of the *Ise* introduction results in a different reading of the *waka*, compared to how Sōkyū uses it at Mount Utsu (see note 15): “Going along the road, the party came to Suruga Province. At Mount Utsu, the road that they considered taking was dark and narrow, and grown thick with ivy, and rather disturbing. As they worried that they might come face to face with some terror, they happened to meet a wandering monk. As the man asked, ‘Why are you going along such a road as this?’ he saw that the monk was a friend of his. He wrote a letter for the monk to take to his beloved in the Capital, and attached a poem:

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Suruga naru</i>        | In Suruga,   |
| <i>Utsu no yamabe no</i>  | near Mount Utsu,                                     |
| <i>utsutsu ni mo</i>      | neither in reality,                                  |
| <i>yume ni mo hito ni</i> | nor in my dreams                                     |
| <i>awanu narikeri</i>     | am I able to meet the one I love.” (SNKBT 17, 88–89) |

59 This is a reference to Nōin, who takes as a souvenir a piece of wood from the Nagara Bridge, an *utamakura* in present-day Osaka. Ide, located to the south of Kyōto, is an *utamakura* site famous for frogs, among other things.

60 The name of this pinecone is a homophone for the words pine tree (*matsu*) and rain hat (*kasa*). Sōkyū and his companion play on these words in each of the poems to follow. Both poems also make allusions to *Kokinshū* no. 1093:

and I gathered them up, along with some things that looked like empty shells from Shiogama Bay. When I showed these to the man, he said,

|                          |                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Sue no matsu</i>      | Passing the mountain pines       |
| <i>yama matsukasa ha</i> | of Sue no Matsuyama,             |
| <i>kitaredomo</i>        | though I don a pinecone rain hat |
| <i>namida ni kosaba</i>  | I am engulfed by waves,          |
| <i>mata ya nureran</i>   | soaked in tears.                 |

And I replied,

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>Nami kosanu</i>       | The waves did not engulf me,           |
| <i>sode sahe nurenu</i>  | yet my traveling sleeves were soaked   |
| <i>Sue no Matsu</i>      | sleeping under the pinecone umbrella,  |
| <i>yama matsukasa no</i> | in the shadows of the mountain pines — |
| <i>kage no tabine ni</i> | Sue no Matsuyama.                      |

I realized that this was one vow of friendship that would not crumble, even if the pinecones were to rot away, and I soaked my sleeves with tears again. At this, the man said,

|                           |                                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Tomonawade</i>         | It is useless to look             |
| <i>hitori yukiken</i>     | at the salty shells               |
| <i>Shihogama no</i>       | of Shiogama Bay,                  |
| <i>ura no shihogai</i>    | where you must have gone          |
| <i>miru kahi mo nashi</i> | without my company. <sup>61</sup> |

And I replied,

|                         |                                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Shihogama no</i>     | There would have been no use     |
| <i>urami no hate ha</i> | to collect these shells for you, |

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|                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Kimi wo okite</i>    | If I had such a fickle heart  |
| <i>adashigokoro wo</i>  | as to spurn my beloved,       |
| <i>wa ga motaba</i>     | ocean waves would surely      |
| <i>Sue no Matsuyama</i> | engulf the pines              |
| <i>nami mo koemu</i>    | of Sue no Matsuyama. (KT, 22) |

61 An allusion to an anonymous poem in *Kokinshū* Miscellaneous I, no. 867:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>Murasaki no</i>       | If I had but a single blade                  |
| <i>hito moto yuhe ni</i> | of the purple murasaki grass,                |
| <i>Musashino no</i>      | at Musashino Plains,                         |
| <i>kusa ha minagara</i>  | looking at all the grass,                    |
| <i>aware to zo miru</i>  | I would look with love for the one. (KT, 17) |

The word for “resentment” (*urami*) is a homophone for the phrase “gazing over the bay”, and is used in both this and the following poem.

|                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>kimi ga tame</i>    | if you only resent             |
| <i>hirofu shihogai</i> | that I gazed over the waves    |
| <i>kahi ya nakaran</i> | of Shiogama Bay. <sup>62</sup> |

I continued on as my heart led me, and as the days went by, without realizing it, my thoughts began to turn toward my home. I didn't set myself only to the road home, but my way back went rather quickly. One night at a traveler's inn, upon waking from the sleep of an old man, I turned to the wall, and in the remaining light of my lamp, put down my thoughts of all the famous places that I had passed on my travels, so as not to forget.<sup>63</sup> I made note of them without speaking much about the specific circumstances, just as they came to me in my memories, and carried them with me to the Capital as souvenirs of my journey.

## Abbreviations

KT *Kokka taikan* = Matsushita 1988a.

ZKT *Zoku kokka taikan* = Matsushita 1988b.

SNKBT *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku taikei* SNKBT 17 = Horiuchi and Akiyama 1997.

**62** This poem further develops the references to *Kokinshū* no. 867 (see note 61). In addition to the *urami* homophone, this poem also plays on the words *kai* (O.J. *kahi*) as “shell” and “use.”

**63** This line makes reference to three poems by Bai Juyi from the *Wakan rōeishū* Old Age, no. 724:

*Oi no nemuri ha hayaku samete  
tsune ni yo wo nokosu  
yamai no chikara ha mazu otoroete  
toshi wo matazu*

In *Wakan rōeishū* Autumn Nights, no. 233:

*Aki no yo nagashi yo nagakushite  
neru koto nakereba ama mo akezu  
kōkōtaru nokon no tomoshibi no  
kabe ni somuketaru kage  
shōshōtaru kuraki ame no  
mado wo utsu koe*

and in *Wakan rōeishū* Love, no. 782:

*Sekiden ni hotaru toned  
omoi shōzen tari  
aki no tomoshibi kakage tsukushite  
imada nemuru koto atawazu*

As I age, I wake earlier from sleep  
with nighttime remaining in abundance  
Illness creeps in with failing strength  
if not simply because of age. (NKBZ 73, 237)

Autumn nights are long, with long nights  
and no sleep, the sky never brightens.  
The remaining light of the candle  
throws my shadow on the wall,  
the falling rain in the darkness  
is a voice that strikes the window.  
(NKBZ 73, 106)

I see fireflies flying in my sleeping chamber,  
and get lost in gloomy thought.  
On long autumn nights the candles burn out  
yet I am unable to sleep. (NKBZ 73, 252)

NKBZ *Nihon koten bungaku zenshū*; NKBZ 73 = Kawaguchi and Shida 1960  
 SNKBT 51 = Asami 1997  
 SNKBT 52 = Kojima 2001  
 SNKBT 87 = Hashimoto, Tamotsu, and Fujihara 2002

## Additional Resources

In addition to the resources cited directly in the footnotes above, this translation is indebted to the pioneering work of Herbert Plutschow and Fukuda Hideichi (1981). It also relies on an array of important reference works, namely, encyclopedias of literature and poetry (Ariyoshi 1982, Inoue 1999, Ishihara 2000, Kubota 1962); and of *utamakura*, place names, and historical figures (Kadokawa Bunka Shinkō Zaidan 1999, Kubota and Baba 1999, Yasuda 1985, Yoshihara 2008); as well as the *Nihon Kokugo Daijiten* (2nd edition, 2000–2002) and the *Shinpen Kokka Taikan* (1983–1992). These references may also be found in the Bibliography.

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